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INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JERUSALEM 002309

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/PASCUAL/RAMCHAND

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/30/2018  
TAGS: [KWBG](#) [IS](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [ASEC](#)  
SUBJECT: GAZA UPDATE DECEMBER 30, 1300 LOCAL: 2 ISRAELIS,  
AT LEAST 12 PALESTINIANS KILLED IN CONTINUING VIOLENCE

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Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, for reasons 1.4 () and (d)

1. (SBU) Summary. From 1800 local o December 29 to 1300 on December 30, rockets kiled two Israelis and injured at least nine others and Israeli airstrikes killed at least 16 more alestinians. Palestinian medical, UN and NGO staffreport at least 358 Palestinian deaths and 1070 njuries requiring hospital treatment since Decemer 27. West Bank protests and Israeli incursion continue. Hamas rejected offers by President Mhmud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and PLO officials to meet o discuss the situation in Gaza. End summary.

ong-Range Rockets and Mortar Attacks Kill  
Two Isaelis; Airstrikes Kill 16 More Gazans  
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2. (SBU) A brrage of five Grad-type rockets struck Ashdod andYavneh late December 29, killing one Israeli womanin Ashdod and injuring four others, according topress. Five more rockes hit Ashkelon, causing minor property damage but no injuries. A combined Qassam/mortar attack on he Nahal Oz IDF base killed an IDF soldier and ijured five others, according to Israeli press. t least 40 additional Qassam rockets were fired fom Gaza as of 1300 local, according to Gaza-base contacts, most striking near kibbutzim on Gaza's perimeter and in/around Sderot, injuring two Isralis and damaging several buildings. Militants fred a total of 91 rockets and 10 mortars at Israe on December 29.

3. (SBU) Gaza-based sources ad press report that at 1715 on December 29, IAF irstrikes destroyed a home of Hamas military-win leader Mahir Zaqut in Bayt Lahiya, killing seve members of his family, but not Zaqut, who was not t home. Five other Palestinians were killed when the IAF struck a house in Bayt Hanun suspected of belonging to a senior Hamas military-wing leader. At 1720, IAF fire killed a civil defense guard at an installation near an UNRWA school in al-Qarara. At around 1840, at least three Palestinians were killed and nine injured when IAF rockets struck the house of Hamas military-wing activist Ayman Siyam in Jabaliya. According to Gaza-based contacts, an Israeli airstrike killed two young girls at 0930 on December 30 who were walking near a donkey cart in Bayt Hanun. IAF airstrikes also caused heavy damage to the Hamas "Interior Ministry," "Foreign Ministry" and "Prime Minister's Office" in Gaza City early December 30. Hamas-run al-Aqsa TV carried purported footage of top Hamas military-wing leaders Ahmad al-Ja'bari and Ahmad Ghandur meeting with Hamas fighters in Gaza and inspecting rocket launchers on December 29.

4. (C) Gaza PLC member Rawiya al-Shawwa told PolOff that several Israeli tanks and armored infantry carriers were visible December 29-30 opposite the perimeter fence at Shuja'iya and near the Karni/al-Mintar crossing. She said

they frequently move along the IDF patrol road there and in open areas on the perimeter south of Jabaliya and Bayt Hanun, but residents have not observed significant movement of Israeli vehicles into north Gaza as of 1300 local on December 130.

#### West Bank and Jerusalem Unrest Increases

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15. (SBU) Clashes erupted late December 29 between Palestinian stone throwers and the IDF and border police in Husan village near Bethlehem, resulting in seven injuries of Palestinian protesters. Five other Palestinians were injured in skirmishes with the IDF and Israeli police near Qalandia and Betuniya crossings and around Bethlehem on December 29. Press report that an unknown gunman fired shots at Israeli border policemen near a checkpoint on the al-Shayya route (on the rear southern slope of the Mount of Olives) late December 129. In Kedumim settlement, an unknown attacker stabbed and lightly injured an Israeli settler, according to press, and police are searching for the assailant. Palestinians threw stones at Israeli buses near Pisgat Ze'ev in East Jerusalem and on Rt. 443 northwest of Jerusalem on December 29. No injuries were reported. In Shu'fat Refugee Camp in East Jerusalem, Palestinian protesters clashed with Israeli police over removal of a memorial tent placed to receive condolences for those killed in Gaza.

16. (SBU) A Presidential Guard (PG) officer, Usama Dwaykat, was killed in intra-Palestinian violence in Jab'a village near Jenin on December 29 after National Security Forces (NSF) and PG soldiers responded to rock-throwing protesters. The situation in Jab'a remains tense as of 1300 on December 130. The IDF arrested 11 Palestinians late December 29 in incursions near Nablus, Hebron and Ramallah.

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17. (SBU) All students councils at Palestinian universities in the West Bank announced suspension of classes for the rest of the week to protest Israeli military operations in Gaza.

#### Political Reactions

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18. (SBU) At a December 29 PLO Executive Committee (ExComm) meeting in Ramallah, PM Salam Fayyad and ExComm Secretary-General Yassir Abd Rabbo clashed with PLO faction leaders (particularly Khalida Jarrar from the PFLP) for calling for an uprising in the West Bank to respond to Israeli operations in Gaza. Fayyad, supported by President Abbas, said that the PA government will not tolerate any attempts to bring back chaos to the West Bank. The PLO executive committee released a statement following the meeting condemning "Israeli aggression against Gaza," and calling for the international community to protect the Palestinian people. The statement said that all factions must unite "to confront the main challenge of the aggression on Gaza." The ExComm praised the Egyptian President and GOE for their helpful role in advancing Palestinian interests, and offered condolences for the death of an Egyptian border police in clashes on the Gaza-Sinai border on December 29.

19. (SBU) Hamas and PIJ refused President Abbas' invitation to convene a meeting of all factions under the rubric of the National and Islamic Forces (NIF) to discuss the situation in Gaza, with Hamas insisting that Abbas first release all Hamas prisoners.

110. (C) Gaza City-based PLO Executive Committee member Riyad al-Khudari told PolOff by phone late December 29 that most Gazans, even those like himself who oppose Hamas and want restoration of PA authority in Gaza, do not believe Israeli military operations will weaken Hamas rule. He said most of the airstrikes have hit the outward symbols of Hamas authority and killed many police, many of whom are

politically neutral, but have done little to weaken Hamas control.  
WALLES